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Ubiquity of Music and its prevalence – some approaches

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Abstract

In the current era of globalization, basic human needs are not limited only to food and shelter. Today's society cannot move forward without education, health, technology and art and music too. Music is an integral part of society. As an expression of inner emotion, a celebration of life, and a symbol of everlasting memories, music remains at the core. This article focuses on how music can be articulated in common language and behavior. How music is defined by ordinary people to experts? So this paper is to write about the views expressed by various authors and eastern and western scholars to prove the ubiquity of music in this article. What are the different dimensions of music from the time of creation to the present and especially with regard to eastern music from different perspectives have been described in the following article. For answering the above questions, some of the major ancient texts, curricular books, research articles, public views and web materials are cited as well as reviewed and analyzed to draw the conclusion.

Keywords: Ubiquity, music, sound, spirituality, beauty.

Introduction:

Music is one of the integral aspects of human life. Every human activity is directly or indirectly affected by music. If we go through the history and study mythology, music seems to be ubiquitous in the then prevailing contemporary society. Thus, it is very relevant to know the meaning of such popular music. According to the scholar Earnest Hunt, "Music is not only a sound but also a powerful tool to open the human instincts." The meaning of music is given in the following verse of Sangeet Ratnakara (Chaudhari, 2006)-

गीतंवाद्यंतथानृत्यंत्रयंसंगीतमुच्यते। (१-२१) – संगीतरत्नाकर

Which means the confluence of song, instrument and dance is called music.

The word 'music' is formed by adding the prefix 'Sam' to the word 'song'(Gautam, 2069). So, primarily, music is the presentation of songs(Acharya, 2068). In fact, although these three genres (singing, playing and dancing) are independent, since ancient times these three genres have been performed simultaneously, however, only one of the songs or instruments or dances is considered music because the instruments come under the singing and the dances come under the instruments(Chaudhari, 2006). As stated in the Ratnakara song leads instruments and dance.

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नृत्तं बाद्यानुगं प्रोक्तं बाद्यंगीतानुवर्त्ति च। अतो गीतं प्रधानत्वाद्वा दत्रादावभिधियते॥

'Song' means the composition of emotional words. Weaving a garland of words to express human feelings is a song, but the meaning of a song is not complete still. My opinion says, a song is a series of words (such as a story, a poem, an essay, a Gazal, a Muktak) sung in a suitable tone using different musical notes (Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, Ni). In this sense, a group of words spoken with the intention of singing or humming can be called a song and the act of singing is called song. Similarly, an instrumental performance is the act of playing an instrument using the necessary notes out of the seven notes. Further, instrumental performance varies between note-based and rhythm-based. Note-based instrument (SvaraSaaj) is an instrumental presentation using sapta-swara (sa, re, ga, ma, pa, dha, ni) include harmonium, guitar, sitar, sarangi, keyboard, flute, mandolin, trumpet, panchaibaja, piano, jaltarang, sahnai, etc., through which musical notes are generated by blowing, hammering, knocking, rubbing or scraping (Kandel, 2061) the certain parts of instruments.

Likewise songs, instruments and dance require certain clapping or rhythm or movement by instruments such as tabla, madal, drum, dhime, khi, zyamta, chimta, murchunga, dholak, ghanti, kartal, khajadietc (Mishra, 2005) to show certain metering. Such rhythmic instruments are, in other meaning, is known as Percussion Instrument which measure the speed of music or movement and current of musical composition. The world of music is considered incomplete without rhythm. Similarly, another genre in the word music is dance. As presenting human emotions in words is singing, dancing is the action of expressing one's emotions through body gestures along with music. So gestures without instruments or singing should be called acting and not a dance. That is, physical acting combined with singing and instrumental presentation is dance. In dance, especially certain parts of the body like hands, knees, eyes, hip, chest, head, leg etc. are used to present in different postures with emotions based on certain rhythm. However, music, of course, consists of singing, instrumental presentations and dancing activity, but an evitable aspect of each genre is it's own aesthetic or beauty of performance. So a musician should aim at expressing emotions and creating the aesthetic (Mahajan, 1993) while performing any genre is most. A flower without smell is worthless, like so, musical performance without emotion is just the activity. According to Oxford Dictionary, "music is vocal or instrumental sounds (or both) combined in such a way as to produce beauty of form, harmony, and expression of emotion" (Oxford Dictionary, 2003). So different scholars have different views about music.

In an article, Ian Cross discusses music from three perspectives: materialistic view, immanence view and cognitive view (Cross, 2012). Spiritualist musicians have discussed music as an ultimate medium to feel divinity and liberation, while materialist musicians have expressed their views in terms of discipline, profession and art, and there are many who consider music as a means of entertainment only. Alain Daniéloude fines music as "the more or less pleasing effect that correlated sounds produce on our ears" (Pudaruth, 2016). These definitions hint at three main ingredients of music, namely, correlated sounds or sonic whole,

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expression, and beauty. The main objective of the study is to articulate about the ubiquity of music from various approaches. This writing effort definitely paves the way for exposing other possible dimensions related to music.

Method and Materials:

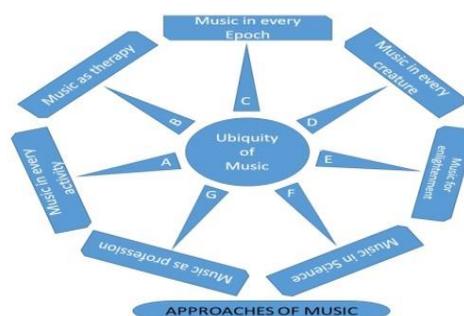
This study has been concluded by critical method. Since the main focus of this research article is music which is one of the important subject of fine arts, the scholarly commentaries that have come to light so far have been used as special material. In order to give concrete form to this study, classical critiques and other secondary materials such as library studies, essays, journals and others, as well as facts found on the internet are also used as important source of information. In addition, the researcher's own experience is taken as a helpful material.

Significant of the research:

Everyone loves music (Resnick, 2016) but as per the convenience. Although the general public, including artists and listeners, have the same opinion about the prevalence of music, so far, no articles have been conducted to further clarify this quality of music. Another requirement is to write about the prevalence of music that, as many old texts as well as countless books written up to modern times are found just limited to the definition and somehow importance of music. One of the first things we notice about music is its innumerable ways of expression. Human beings have been following music and musical products, processes, experiences, and so forth along with their time, effort, thought, passion, money, and, sometimes, even their entire lives in making specific kinds of music for listening and related activities (David, 2012). So, ubiquity of music matters, which has been realized ever and this study definitely contributes some points of view to elaborate the wideness of music in this world, which are described in the discussion section, later. This article is significant for discovering and disclosing the various possible approaches through which music can be understood, as well.

Discussion and Result:

The prevalence of music can be discussed as follows:



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Today's surrounding has reached to Kali Yuga through Satya, Dwapar and Treta according to Hindu epics. The Tandava dance of Lord Shiva, Damru which is invented along with same Tandava, Mridang from Vishnuji, Veena from Saraswati and Kartal playing from Brahma, Ektare from Naradmuni have been mentioned in the many of the Hindu mythology. In Greek mythology Apollo, Thalia, Muses were some God and Goddess said to be masters of music and harmony as well (*God of Music Greek Mythology*, n.d.). According to ancient scriptures of Hindu religion, music originated from Brahma, the author of the Vedas. Bharat, Narad and Hanuman preached music in this world by imparting music education from Brahma to Shiva and from Shiva to Saraswati, from Saraswati to Narad and from Narad to the Gandharvas, Kinnars and Apsaras of heaven (Singh, 1994). Similarly, it is mentioned that Lord Shiva originated Bhairav, Hindol, Megh, Deepak and Shree Raga and Kaushik Raga from Goddess Parvati (Basanta, 1991). In the Tandav Stotram (*Shiv Tandav Stotram*) composed by King Ravan during Dwapar Yuga, Lord Shiva, whose dance of Tandav is accompanied with the series of loud sounds of drum (Mridanga) making the sound "DhimidDhimid" is stated as follows.

धिमिद्धिमिद्धिमिनन्मृदंगतुंगमंगल-
ध्वनिक्रमप्रवर्तितप्रचण्डताण्डवःशिवः॥११॥

67 names of lord Ganesh relating to music (singing) stated in epic *Ganesh Sahasranamawali* as i.e. ॐगानज्ञायनमः, ॐगानरसायननमः तय ॐगानतानविमोहितायनमः (*Ganesh Sahasranamawali*, 1976). Similarly, the names of eminent musician Sarod player King Ravana and Ramayana singer Lava-Kush were during Dwaparayug, Vansidhar Shrikrishna in Tretayug, Mridang player Arjuna and various music patrons like Kabir Das, Surdas, Mirabai, Tulsidas, Tansen, Baijubabara etc. in Kali Yuga are famous (Singh, 1994). It is mentioned in the *Pitriputra Samagam Katha* that 500 instruments were played on the birth anniversary of Lord Buddha. In the history of Nepal, Lichhavi period is considered as the golden age of art and culture, further music has been propagated and developed in the historical medieval period and Shah period, Rana period and beyond.

Music in every creature:

Since the period of creation, even from the trinity Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwara, every living thing including inanimate objects are never separated from music. Music exists in core. Music has found a special space in every aspect of human activity and moreover felt in the cooing of a cuckoo, the burble murmur of waterfall, the sound of a conch, the ticking of time etc. The sound from some living creatures said to be the cause of origination of seven notes of music. According to the description stated in the eastern historical manuscript (Ramamatya, 2006) the seven notes of music i.e. Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, Ni firstly originated from Peacock (Mayur), Tailor Bird (Chatak - Darji Chara), Goat (Bakhra), Crow (Kaag), Koili, Frog and Elephant respectively.

षडजंबदतिमयुरःपुनःस्वरमूरषभंचातकोब्रते।
गान्धाराख्यंछागोनिगदत्तिचमध्यमंक्रौण्चः॥१७०॥

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गदतिपञ्चममण्चितवाकपिकोरटतिधैवतमुन्मदददुर्दुरः ।
शृणिसमाहतमस्तककुण्जरोगदतिनासिकयास्वरमन्तिमम॥१७१॥

According to the Western scholar Freud, just as a child learns from psychological processes such as crying, speaking, playing, laughing, etc., music is also learnt on the basis of psychological processes. In this sense, all living and non-living things are affected of music. According to research studies, dogs, cows, monkeys, chimpanzees, horses, pigs and other animals have a wide difference in their behavior when they listen to music or not (Alworth & Buerkle, 2013).

Music as the means of enlightenment:

The main purpose of doing Gyan Sadhana (learning practice), Bhakti Sadhana (devotional practice) is to attain liberation. From the answer given by Lord Krishna to Narad saying “मद्भक्त्यायत्रगायन्ती, तत्र तिष्ठामीनारद” i.e. Lord Krishna prefers to stay there where devotees sing devotional songs. So it is clear that the importance of music is known to all. Therefore music is considered to be the form of God. Our ancestors of music believed that singing or playing or dancing directly relates with worshiping God. This is evidenced by the musical presentation of hymns, prayers, adorations, etc. to please God. Worshiping Saraswati as a Goddess of music, also confirms that music and God are synonymous. On the basis of the sleeping posture of Goddess Parvati, the origin of the Veena and the *ekatarebadan* of Narad along with the song 'Narayan-Narayan' etc. have made music equivalent to God. In the book *Swarmelakalanidhi*, it is mentioned in the Sloka as follows that Lord Krishna, Lord Brahma and Goddess Saraswati are addicted to the sound of flute, singing and Veena respectively.

गोपिपतिरनन्तोकपिवंशध्वनिवशंभव।सामगीतरतोब्रम्हावीणासक्तासरस्वति॥(Ramamatya, 2006)

According to *Natyashastra*, the fact that the sage Swati invented Pushkar, a rhythmic instrument, along with his spiritual deeds also shows that music is a means of devotion and liberation. On the other side, Psalm 150:2 (*Bible Gateway*) of the Bible also emphasize the importance of music as:

Praise the Lord!
Praise God in his sanctuary;
Praise him in his mighty heavens!
Praise him for his mighty deeds;
Praise him according to his excellent greatness!
Praise him with trumpet sound;
Praise him with lute and harp!
Praise him with tambourine and dance;
Praise him with strings and pipe!
Praise him with sounding cymbals;
Praise him with loud clashing cymbals!
Let everything that has breath praise the Lord!
Praise the Lord!

“Music is the mediator between the spiritual and the sensual life” as Beethoven said (Hunt, 1922).

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Therefore, achieving the ultimate goal (liberation) by enjoying life in a rhythmic way with human desires, aspirations, emotions and others may not be different from the main goal of music.

Music in Science:

Sound is the mother or major factor of music which is caused by friction and vibration. Science is a study of cause and effect. No subject in the world is untouched and unaffected by science. The sound produced by the friction between organs or objects is used in music. Likewise mathematics is the backbone of science and music which means mathematics directs science and music in some context (Crocker, 1963). Therefore, music and science are complementary. Music is the art and science of using the created sound in different ways applying various pitch, timber and magnitude. The sound that can be heard is applied in music through varieties of pitch, rhythm and tempo. Therefore, music is the science of adjusting and arranging the sounds that come out of the relationship between two or more objects in an attractive way.

Science teaches us that sound is vibration, and the frequency of vibration is what makes different sounds. Music then is the study of the sound created by those vibrations, and puts them into patterns that elicit emotion (*The Relationship between Music and Science*, 2015). According to the philosopher and psychologist Plato, music is an indispensable subject for the mental development. According to him, it is appropriate to teach music to a child up to 18 years of age. He further expressed "Music is a moral law. It gives soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination, and charm and gaiety to life and to everything" (*World Vision International*, 2016). The physician of England Dr. Edwin made a long-term study of the effects of music on the body and mind has found that the power of music has a special effect on the nervous and circulatory systems, which gradually removes distortions, anger, imbalances, impulses, etc. According to him, music develops confidence and patience. Similarly, experts emphasize that music is known to manage stress hormones, changing blood pressure and heart rhythm. Fewer sedative drugs need to be used during treatment for all kinds of conditions when soothing music is played. University of Munich survey found that some music can also stimulate the pituitary gland, releasing growth hormones that are associated with improved healing rates. The vibration of string instruments in classical and instrumental music has also been associated with heart rate, small intestine regulation, thyroid regulation, adrenaline release, and adrenal gland regulation. Joyful or upbeat music is closely associated with happier moods because the beat and tone stimulate the release of dopamine and endorphins (*Music's Impact on Medical Outcomes*, 2021). Regular listening to music not only balances the mental state of a person but also proves that cows give a lot of milk, chickens produce relatively large eggs, plants grow healthy and grow fast. Likewise, a research concludes that adding music to textual information can be used as an aid for learning and memory and that many participants believe it is a worthwhile to use (Miller, 2017). It is mentioned in the ancient texts that the use of various ragas has been found to have prompted rain and lightening. Similarly, the use of musical sounds for signals in scientific instruments also shows that the application of music is explored for various scientific purposes.

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Before the modern age, music was considered as a means of salvation, contentment and enlightenment and attainment of God, but now it is considered as a means of wealth maximization, prosperity etc. In today's era of information and technology, the whole world has turned into a small village and as other professions, music has also been developed as a specific profession and industry. In recent years, physical music sales generated 4.4 billion U.S. dollars, whereas digital music sales made 1.5 billion worldwide. The majority of global music revenue now comes from streaming, and accounted for 56.1 percent of total industry revenue in 2019(Statista.Com, 2021). Likewise, the creation of music, the way it is used, is very different than 10 years back. People in today's society seem to acquire knowledge of a specific subject as much as possible and transforming it into a means of livelihood. Therefore, western and eastern music has been taught as an educational subject in various organizations, schools, universities, etc as before in Gurukul. Various genre of music has evolved and followed timely. Today, there are many musicians who have already become famous by practicing specific genre of music as a profession. While people aspire to become doctors, engineers, professors etc, today, in the changed environment, the number of people aspiring to become singers, musicians and dancers has also been increased. They after a lot of hard work can attain a lot of fame overnight. In the context of Nepal, traditionally, some musician castes (like Gaine, Gandharva, Beda, Mon, Gad, Urao, Dom, Kushule, Badi, Hudke and others) have been embracing music as a family profession but today other castes have been adopting music for their livelihood.

Music in every activity:

Music has an important place in every human life. It matters in every moment from birth to death(Anderson et al., 2000). When no language was in human society, the role of music was to exchange human expressions with each other. If we give special attention in our life, music always around us, just need to feel it which is an unique and divine gift of God to the human world.

According to Hindu epic Mahabharata, Ramayana and others, Conch, Bell, Venu, Veena, Bheri, Dundubhi, Panaw, Damaru, Nagara, Mridanga, Sahanai were played in the activities i.e. war, ceasefire, greetings, worshiping, offerings, march, funeral rites and other celebrations(Singh, 1994). Every ritual moments have been made an interrelationship with music somehow. In our country Nepal, approximately 126 language-speaking castes and tribes have their own musical tradition and practices since generation to generation.

Music as therapy:

In today's world, there have been many studies, researches and experiments on music therapy from decades(Dobrzynska, 2006). Some physical and mental problems that cannot be solved by pharmacology are being treated and diagnosed through music(Mannone, 2020).The fact

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has been published that a report from the American Music Therapy Association states that the problems from developmental disabilities, behavioral disorders, learning disability, motor skills disorders, communication disorders, sensory impairments, physical challenges, Alzheimer, heart disease etc can be solved through the application of music in the clinics. Assessment of physiological parameters such as BP, heart rate, pain, body temperature, salivary α -amylase levels, and psychological parameters such as anxiety and quality of life was administered before and after listening music, which reported healthy and improvement in patient after listening music (Syed, 2014). Likewise, the effect of music matters with plants and other living beings too. Sound and music effectively influence the fertile rate, growth rate and resistance rate of plants, as reported (Hassanien et al., 2014). The germination rate can be increased if exposed to music (Chowdhury & Gupta, 2015). Similarly, random sound and pure tone of music also effects the growth of plant (Collins & Foreman, 2001). American Psychological Association concludes in a bulletin that concludes music for the patient of depression and Parkinson (Amy, 2013). Music therapy is also being taught in well-known universities in the West (*Becoming a Music Therapist*, 2021).

Charles Darwin once remarked, "If I had my life to live over again, I would have made a rule to read some poetry and listen to some music at least once every week."

Albert Einstein declared, "If I were not a physicist, I would probably be a musician."

Jimi Hendrix called music as his "religion."

Mahatma Gandhi addresses, "Music has given me peace. I can remember occasions when music instantly tranquillized my mind, when I was greatly agitated over something. Music has helped me to overcome anger".

Conclusion:

Thus, music is an indispensable aspect of life. There has been a general consensus among scholars on ubiquity of music. So music is an integral aspect of human life and an energy for the process of life. Music is indeed the best subject that was in existence since the creation and will continue to the holocaust of this world, in fact. It matters everywhere, which needs to be felt. This study concludes with some approaches about music, which elaborate the existence of music in this world. The field of science is directly or indirectly affected with music and on the other hand, every piece of musical composition is not possible without certain procedure of scientific techniques. Every epoch of this world have been accompanied with music and will be. Plants, creatures, animals and other living beings are affected by music. Our ancestors followed music for achieving livelihood, profession and further enlightenment and this tradition is going on even today. Therapeutic use of music have been applied since old days till today. This study definitely provide some guidelines to concerning people to understand more about music with various points of view. The result of this article can be applied for theoretical purpose. Practical aspect of music is not the issue of this study.

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